

And God Laughs...

The Arthur Jones Autobiography

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“You are the guilty one, oh King.”

Chaka Zulu’s youngest witch doctor

When he was a young child, Chaka Zulu was small for his age, with a disproportionately small penis, and he was a bastard, so he and his mother were both treated as outcasts by other members of his tribe; but when he reached manhood Chaka was a giant, in both physical and sexual size; so he never again wore clothing of any kind, wanted everybody who saw him to know his true dimensions.

When he was a young warrior, native battles involved far more in the way of ritual than they did actual fighting; opposing armies would meet at an agreed place and time, form two lines of warriors facing each other, while maintaining a distance that put them outside of spear range; on a signal, everybody on both sides threw their spears, with no effect because of the range, then both armies ran off and returned to their villages. Chaka Zulu changed all that: he invented the assegai, a long-bladed, short-handled stabbing spear, effectively a sword; then, after the other warriors threw their spears harmlessly, he rushed in and killed hundreds of men with his stabbing spear. His size and his fighting ability quickly led to him becoming the chief of one tribe, and afterwards he added other tribes to a rapidly expanding empire; eventually had total control of a huge area in southern Africa, with a standing army of more than 100,000 warriors, establishing his headquarters in a place called Bulawayo, the place of the killing. There is a city named Bulawayo in Zimbabwe today, but Chaka’s main encampment was in a different location.

An Englishman named Finn lived with Chaka for many years, and while Finn was a bit of a charlatan in respect to his claims on the subject of medicine, he was a very accurate historian and his accounts of his experiences with Chaka are supported by all of the other evidence. In his later years, when Chaka’s hair started to turn gray, Finn helped him maintain a more youthful appearance by dyeing his hair with black shoe polish; but had some problems with this when he ran out of shoe polish.

Chaka had no religion apart from his belief in the stabbing spear, but clearly understood that his people did have great respect for the witch doctors; which eventually produced a situation that Chaka could not tolerate, since witch doctors were given half of everything that a sniffed-out evil doer owned and thus directed their charges against the wealthiest members of the tribe.

So one night Chaka drugged the men who were guarding his hut, and then smeared the blood of an animal onto the front of his hut while the guards were asleep from the drug; the next morning he had the guards killed for sleeping on duty, then ordered the witch doctors to sniff-out the people who had insulted the king. Hundreds of thousands of people were called in to his headquarters and the sniffing-out of the guilty parties started; by the late afternoon of the first day, the senior witch doctors had pointed to more than a thousand supposedly guilty people, who had been segregated for later execution.

But the youngest and most junior of the witch doctors was given a chance only after all the others had finished selecting victims, and he had been observing Chaka very carefully throughout the day; so when it came his turn to indicate the guilty parties he accused Chaka of having done it himself, and he was right. Whereupon the selected victims were released and all of the witch doctors were executed by impalement, had a sharp stick shoved up inside their bodies. And the youngest witch doctor then became the new chief of the witch doctors.

In another case of trouble with witch doctors, a woman in this instance, a woman who claimed that her familiar was a hyena, claiming that she could turn herself into a hyena, when her actions exceeded Chaka’s patience he had her locked inside a closed hut; then put a hyena in the hut with her, having told her that he did not want her to become lonely locked inside a hut by herself. Contrary to popular opinion, hyenas are not primarily scavengers; are, instead, dangerous predators, so Chaka knew that the hyena would kill and eat the woman witch doctor. She managed to stay awake for nearly a week, but finally fell asleep and then the hyena bit one of her feet off; eventually, she lost both hands

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and both feet to the hyena. At which point Chaka gave her a spear to defend herself with because of her demonstrated bravery; but by that point she could no longer use the weapon, so Chaka then burned the hut with her and the hyena still in it.

When Chaka's mother died, he put his entire empire into mourning for her, and forbade any sexual contact of any kind, and killed anybody who did not follow that order. After a year without their women, he lined up 100,000 of his troops on a parade ground, stark naked; then told the women . . . "Arouse them if you can." Then stood to one side and watched what happened; and the first three rows of men, 3,000 warriors, died in their tracks, were knocked in the head when their state of sexual arousal became obvious.

More than 100 years later, then 121 years old, one of his surviving warriors was questioned about that incident by a reporter in Durban, who asked the old man . . . "How did any of you survive?"

And the old man said . . . "The women danced up close, and told us 'Hit yourselves where we cannot,' and even now, more than a century later, I can still remember the pain; but we survived."

On another occasion Chaka covered a rock-hard parade ground thickly with the branches from thorn trees; the thorns on these branches being formed into a shape that assures that a long and very sharp thorn will always be pointed straight up. Then Chaka ordered his troops to dance on top of the thorns until they were all stomped into the hard ground, while singing and smiling; and killed anybody who stopped singing or smiling.

He personally led his warriors on nonstop runs of more than fifty miles without rest or water, and forced his lawyers to run with the troops, and anybody who dropped behind was killed on the spot.

In these and other ways he established a tribal discipline that was probably without precedent anywhere throughout history; and eventually established the largest standing army of native warriors in African history; but never used these troops against the whites, the Zulu wars against the whites came much later, long after Chaka was dead.

He was eventually murdered in a manner almost identical to the assassination of Caesar in Rome; stabbed to death by his associates; but after he was dead they were still afraid of him, so left his body on the ground in front of his hut and abandoned the camp. During the following night Chaka's mistress guarded his body, keeping the hyenas from eating him; so the next morning, when his killers returned, expecting to find his body gone, they found it undisturbed although surrounded by hundreds of hyena tracks. So then they really believed that he had been a God.

Chaka was undoubtedly one of the most brutal men who ever lived, routinely executing several hundred people every day for many years, killing them by impalement or crucifixion; but he was a brilliant strategist and obviously understood human nature very well. His equal has not been seen in Africa since his death if it has been seen anywhere.

Perhaps the only place else where such discipline ever existed was in the Philippines during the Spanish American War; the Moros would strip themselves naked, then bind their testicles and penis with green strips of cow hide and then soak the resulting lump with salt water to cause the hide to shrink, thus crushing their testicles and penis. The idea being to produce so much pain that they could then feel nothing else; their nervous system was so overloaded with pain that a shot through the heart was not even noticed. Having prepared themselves in that fashion, they would then rush into an American encampment with a bolo knife and start chopping heads and necks, and six shots into the heart with a .38 calibre revolver would not stop them quickly enough to prevent them from killing several American troops before they died. Which is why the Army adopted the much larger .45 calibre pistol; they needed a bullet large enough to stop these Moros in their tracks.

But, then, just how do you go about intimidating a man who has already decided to die, and who has rendered himself immune to additional pain? He is not afraid to die, and cannot even feel any form of torture.

The solution to that problem was provided by capturing them alive, wrapping them in a pig skin, and burying them up to the neck and leaving them to die. To them, a pig, or any part of a pig, was evil; any contact with it would mean that they would spend eternity burning in Hell. When the American troops started doing that the situation was quickly brought under control.

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Cruel? Consider the only alternative; genocide, killing all of them, wiping them out as a race of people.

Which would have been the only alternative for the Americans in the war with Japan if the use of the nuclear bombs had not provided them an opportunity to surrender with honor. So those two bombs saved far more people than they killed, millions more.

I have spent many years among the Zulu people that Chaka formed into a nation nearly 200 years ago, and have great respect for them; but do not be surprised by what will eventually happen in South Africa under majority black rule, because long after Chaka's death most of the Zulus still have the same traditions and attitudes established by Chaka.